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NATURE CONSERVATION NEWS

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November, 1953

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

The central offices of the Conservancy are now at 607 G Street, S.E., Washington 3, D.C. These new quarters are larger and more adequate for our needs than the space formerly occupied on Mintwood Place. The present location, however, is available only temporarily and we must move again by next summer. We are now investigating several possible locations, but we need to know of others.

The Conservancy needs an adequate home. Perhaps you can help in some way to make one possible. If so, we would be pleased to hear from you. A desirable location would meet the following qualifications to a reasonable degree: 1) Ample space at low cost. A medium to large house would serve admirably for the forseeable future. 2) Proximity to a center of interest in nature preservation and culture in general. 3) Central geographic location.

A home with these features would give a tremendous boost to our organization. Since we are not a lobbying organization, it would seem that headquarters in Washington are not essential. Any of the university communities in the Middle West would meet a good many of the qualifications.

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The annual meeting of the Conservancy, held in Madison, Wisconsin, on September 9, adopted changes in the by-laws to provide three new classes of organizational members: affiliated organizations, consisting of chartered chapters of the Conservancy; cooperating organizations, consisting of independent groups that pursue programs similar to those of the Conservancy and that endorse or support the program of the Conservancy and express a desire to coordinate their work with it; and sponsoring organizations, consisting of independent groups that are unable to work directly in this field but that endorse or support the program of the Conservancy.

The meeting elected Dr. Herbert C. Hanson of the Catholic University of America as secretary. New additions to the Board of Governors include Mr. Albert M. Fuller of the Milwaukee Public Museum and Mr. Alvin G. Whitney of Delmar, New York. Mr. George B. Fell, who formerly occupied the position of secretary, relinquished that post to accept appointment as executive director. Other officers and Board members remain unchanged.

By unanimous vote, the meeting elected Dr. Victor E. Shelford as the first Honorary Member of the Conservancy. Dr. Shelford has for many years been a leader in the nature preservation movement and he organized the group that has now grown into the Nature Conservancy.

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The Board of Governors is now formulating policies for the operation of chapters. The new policies will supplement the present policy for state operations and it is hoped will give a substantial boost to the organization of our state and local efforts. Detailed information on these new policies will be available soon.

Further news about the Conservancy's progress will be included in the 1953 annual report, due to come off the press soon.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

The Conservation Education Association was organized at Purdue University September 18 as a national professional group to promote conservation education. It supersedes the National Committee on Policies in Conservation Education which was dissolved, according to the new president, Dr. A. G. Peterson, president of the Eastern Montana College of Education.

Other officers of the Association are Dr. Howard Michaud of Purdue University as vice president, Dr. Richard L. Weaver of the University of Michigan as secretary, and Mr. William Voigt, Jr. of the Izaak Walton League as treasurer.

The Board of Directors is composed of Dr. R. H. Eckelberry of Ohio State University, Dr. E. L. Palmer, educational director of the National Wildlife Federation, Dr. Olin Capps of the Missouri

Conservation Education (cont.):
Department of Conservation, Mr. Arthur S. Rollins, superintendent of schools in Plymouth, New Hampshire, Dr. E. C. Harrah of Colorado State College, Mr. A. C. Dawson of the Texas Game and Fish Commission, and Mr. C. W. Mattison of the U. S. Forest Service.

Committees were organized on Public Relations with Bert D. Robinson, U. S. Soil Conservation Service, as chairman; on Program with Ed Dolder, California Department of Natural Resources, as chairman; on Budget and Finance with Dr. Howard Michaud of Purdue University as chairman; on Membership with Byron Ashbaugh of Maryland Department of Research and Education as chairman; on State Cooperation with Dr. Richard L. Weaver as chairman. State representatives will be appointed.

THE POPULATION COUNCIL

On August 4, the formation of the Population Council was announced from New York, according to the Population Bulletin. It is a non-profit membership corporation, with offices at 230 Park Ave., New York 17, N. Y. Mr. Frederick Osborn will serve as Executive Vice President with responsibility for directing the work during the formative period. The Council is to participate in five basic areas of the population problem:

1) To study the problems presented by the increasing population of the world and the relation of that population to material and cultural resources.

2) To encourage and support research and the advancement and diffusion of knowledge resulting from such research.

3) To serve generally as a center for the collection and exchange of facts and information on the significant ideas and developments relating to population questions.

4) To cooperate with individuals and institutions having similar interests.

5) To take initiative in the broad fields which in the aggregate constitute the population problem.

TOURISTS AND NATURE PROTECTION

State park attendance reached an all-time high of nearly 150,000,000 visitors in 1952, an increase of 24% over 1951 and 61% over 1946, the first normal post war year, according to recently released statistics from the National Park Service. Canada's national parks set a new record last year of more than 2 ½ million visitors.

At the Third Technical Meeting of the International Union for the Protection of Nature, held at Salzburg, Austria on September 18, 1953, the problem of nature protection and tourism was discussed. The meeting adopted a resolution reading in part:

"The natural beauty of a country, including the fauna and flora, becomes through the growth of tourism, a considerable economic factor and consequently, the protection of nature is a mutual interest of the organizations responsible for tourist development and of those concerned directly with nature protection. It is, therefore, urgently necessary to establish close, continuous and comprehensive cooperation between such organizations; and the Technical Meeting of the IUPN recommends that for this purpose the following action shall be taken:

"1) Consultation in each country between the appropriate central organizations, with the approval of their governments, to define fully the main possible areas and methods of cooperation, for example, through publicity and education and by the establishment in suitable conditions of national parks open to the public for the attraction of tourists, for the education of the public in nature conservation and for the relief of undesirable pressure to visit particular areas of special natural interest which ought to be kept quiet as strict nature reserves.

"2) Similar consultation with a view to securing the understanding and support of tourist organizations for the active exercise of their influence in the interest of nature protection and for the necessity of discouraging or limiting visits to such special areas as it may prove essential to constitute or maintain as strict nature reserves.

"3) Working out of detailed local arrangements to ensure early consultation and agreement before any action is taken on all projects where tourist development may cause disturbance or loss to fauna and flora, or where other economic developments may cause harm both to tourism and nature conservation.

"4) Further study of the needs and activities of tourists in relation to nature protection with a view to further measures of education and to the reconciliation of such particular conflicts as may exist between the interests of tourism and of nature protection."

NOTABLE LOCAL CONSERVATION SOCIETIES

III. The Friends of Our Native Landscape

Prairies have often bred pensive people. So have other environments, of course. But there is much cause for thought as one lives under so much sky, hears the continuous wind, and sees tall grass waving against the horizon. Midwesterners sensitive to their prairie environment were led by Jens J. Jensen in 1913 to found The Friends of Our Native Landscape, to safeguard sites in Illinois where future generations could survey the natural scenes and have a chance to feel --and to think.

Many areas in Illinois have been preserved through the efforts of F O N L, including Apple River Canyon, Starved Rock, White Pines, and Pali-

sades. These areas include habitats where geology and vegetational history joined to create special landscape patterns amid the prairies.

F O N L has been resourceful in publicizing the values of the native Illinois landscape. One method has been the presentation of a dramatic pageant by Kenneth Sawyer Goodman, "The Beauty of the Wild", enactments of which in outdoor settings have sometimes been viewed by as many as 5000 people. In recent years, emphasis has been placed on sensitizing young people to natural scenery by training teachers and other leaders of youth, giving them first-hand information about natural resources and their conservation.

Every year, six trips are conducted to special areas as part of the educational program. Another tool is the 12 page Bulletin containing material of use to both teachers and students.

Members of the Nature Conservancy will probably be especially interested in the manner in which the purposes of F O N L are stated in its constitution as amended in 1933. In it can be sensed the awareness of a multitude of habitats, each with its particular contribution to the human environment:

— * * —

"The object of the society is the conservation of that spiritual power in the American landscape which belongs of right to mankind, yesterday, today, and forever, as a perennial fountain of education and joy.

"The object, concretely, is to have set apart in each state one or more examples of the landscape types which existed there at the advent of the white man, and which are fast vanishing before the encroachment of industry and commerce.

"The local object in particular is to insure, for the people of today and of all coming generations, the preservation in Illinois of typical examples of streams with their adjoining bluffs and flood plains and their native trees and flowers, woodlands of diverse types, including oaks of the various species, woods of white pine and of yellow pine; woods of beech and woods of maple; swamp woods of ash, elm and elder; and kindred things; dunes with their rare and marvelous carpets, such as are found along Lake Michigan and the Illinois River; the fast disappearing prairies, once the most characteristic feature of Illinois, with their remarkable and variant bloom; ravines and canyons with their unusual trees, and ferns, and their innumerable favorite flowers; ponds and swamps where the water birds make their haunts and many plants find their homes; tamarack swamps of the North and the cypress swamps of the South, each with unique plant and animal life; rock outcroppings where the geologists may study earth history and where are found many peculiar plants; mounds with their mute testimony of races long since gone; and all spots and places of primitive beauty or interest that will tie the present and future generations to the mysterious past and serve as playgrounds for the people and as a sanctuary of the wild plant and animal life of our native State."

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How many states have so much as a paragraph which thus mingles the melodies of many habitats into one paeon for preservation?

Those who knew Jens Jensen must feel close to him as they stand today in some Illinois natural area, remembering bits of his philosophy that human life is inextricably woven into the immutable laws of the universe. They sense the calm which one can feel when alone out-of-doors; but they will turn away with Jensen's feeling of urgency strengthened in them, the urge to work for a sharing of these privileges all down through the trails and trials of never-ending time.

For learning more about the Friends of Our Native Landscape, or for procuring the Bulletin, contact W. F. Willard, Secretary, 3749 N. Kildare Avenue, Chicago 41, Illinois.

Biology Class Now Has Its Own Natural Area

By Enid A. Larson

A far-sighted Board of Trustees of the Carmel Unified School District recently acted favorably upon the request of the Biology Department of Carmel High School to set aside a small, unused area of land for the purpose of providing an outdoor laboratory for the study, under natural conditions, of native plants and animals in their relationships to the land.

As a result of this action, a program in natural history is now possible and is actually underway at Carmel High School. Already this area has been mapped, explored and fenced. Soon it will be posted and designated as a Natural Area in which all further disturbances by man will be eliminated. It is proposed to set this area aside permanently as an undisturbed natural area in accordance with the principles of The Nature Conservency.

Students in the advanced biology classes at Carmel High School translated a nebulous idea into actuality as a direct outgrowth of their study and work in the field of Conservation Education. The annual Pine Cone Award, given over a period of years, aids materially in maintaining student interest, enthusiasm and intelligent participation in this vital field of education. The proximity of Point Lobos, an area set aside by the State of California under conditions where man's influences are kept strictly at minimum, was further stimulus for the growth of our idea to establish such a Natural Area at Carmel High School. In the words of the late Dr. Joseph Grinnell: "the best ways to conserve animal life, in the interest of sportsman, scientist, and nature lover is to preserve conditions as nearly as possible favorable to our own native species!" This is what we propose to do.

Already in our Natural Area two students, Bill King and Francis Schutz, are undertaking a study of the rate growth of Monterey Pine and Live Oak seedlings. Small rodents are at home here and their populations are arousing interest in the study of Mammalogy. One student looks forward to a career as a trained botanist: he is beginning his study of grasses now as a junior at Carmel High School. Poison oak is abundant in the area and it will be left growing. Its place in the food cycle of birds and mammals will be studied. Oregon Juncos, Audubon Warblers, Bewick Wrens, Golden and White Crown Sparrows are a few of the birds which live in the area at this season.

The success of this project will depend on the understanding and intelligent support of the entire student body of our school as well as of all local citizens. We are glad to be able to tell you now that such a Natural Area has been esablished at Carmel High School. We look forward to reporting to you our progress from time to time. We welcome your interest; we solicit your cooperation. 3-6-53

from the
CARMEL PINE CONE-CYMBAL
Carmel-by-the-Sea, California

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY
607 G STREET, SOUTHEAST
WASHINGTON 3, D. C.

The Nature Conservancy is an independent member-governed organization dedicated to saving America's heritage of wild nature. Its specific object is to preserve natural areas as "living museums" of the primeval wilderness. Such tracts are precious for their scientific, educational, and esthetic values. They also afford a home for the multitude of kinds of living things that would otherwise vanish from the earth, destroyed by our civilization.

The work of our organization began in 1917 under the direction of a committee of the Ecological Society of America. In 1946 the Ecologists Union was formed to take over these tasks. In 1950 its name was changed to the Nature Conservancy.

We, the members of the Nature Conservancy, invite you to join with us in this work. Membership is open to both individuals and organizations. Your contribution is an allowable income tax deduction.

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Weird Jungle Offers Its Riches for Study

'Shrouded Forest' Is Made Reservation in Venezuela

By Thomas R. Henry

One of earth's weirdest regions is the "shrouded forest."

It is the bat-filled jungle that covers large areas of the seaward slopes of Venezuela's Maritime Andes. Throughout this dense forest a strange white mist rises from the moisture-soaked earth to envelope everything like a shroud.

This shrouded forest is essentially without human inhabitants. It has an extremely rich animal life—gigantic spiders spinning monstrous webs in its liana-laced trees, deadly serpents such as the mapanare and green cock, sloths, many varieties of New World monkeys, brilliantly colored humming birds, parrots and mountain lions.

Law of Tooth and Claw.

It is, like all dense jungle, a dark and sunless place of oppressive silence during the day, for its denizens, living by the jungle's inexorable law of tooth and claw, avoid drawing attention to themselves by any sound. When night falls, the forest teems with millions of black and gray bats many of which, like the humming birds, seek flowers with the richest nectar rather than insects which are the ordinary prey of their kind.

Under the shade of the giant trees grow all sizes of ferns from tiny varieties to some which reach the height of a two-story house. Orchids of all colors are plentiful in the treetops.

This jungle is a paradise for naturalists and collectors. It still is only partially explored and may be expected to yield many as yet unknown varieties of plants and animals, although probably all the more conspicuous and fantastic types have been described. Among the most notable of the naturalist-explorers of this region was the former Agriculture Department scientist, Swiss-born Henry Pittier, who spent the last 37 years of his life in Venezuela. Pittier, who died in 1950, became one of his adopted country's greatest scientists.

In his honor the Venezuelan government has just set aside a large tract of the shrouded jungle as a wild-life preserve and national park. Under this arrangement it will be preserved perpetually as a part of the primeval jungle for the benefit of naturalists from all over the world who have been invited to carry out researches there.

The 210,000-acre Henry Pittier National Park straddles the coastal range for a distance of 32 miles. It extends down to the sea and includes part of the large fresh-water Lake Valencia. The area may be divided into three sections—park-like forest on top of the mountains, thick jungle on the slopes, and wasteland on the plains near the sea. It includes areas of sword-grass covered savanna, thorn woodland and cactus scrub. The shrouded jungle, however, is the place of greatest scientific interest.

Study of Natural Resources.

The greater part of the area is generally sub-tropical throughout the year. It is cool and very damp throughout the year because of the great mist-cap. The average humidity recorded during expeditions in both the dry and rainy seasons is 92.4 per cent and the average temperature for the entire year about 64 Fahrenheit.

The area is considered an ideal place for biological studies at the time before it becomes—as it is feared it will become eventually—a region for tourists. Apart from purely scientific studies, observations made in the park are expected to throw light on conservation of natural resources on similar zones throughout the tropics. The old biological laboratory established by Pittier is being expanded and a herbarium is being built up. More than 100 varieties of insects, some of them hitherto unknown to science, have been collected from the park.

--from THE EVENING STAR
Washington, D. C. OCT. 19, 1953